

those proposals from the Ag and Environment Committee to the Public Works Committee. Senator Schmit's motion is on page 315 of the Journal.

PRESIDENT: May we have order in the Chamber, please. (Gavel.) Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise this morning in response to the motion which the Clerk has just read. I do so because of the deep concern that I feel for the integrity of the committee system, the system upon which we rely, the system which is the backbone and the foundation of the Legislature. I recognize there are always differences of opinion relative to various issues. I'd like to just give you a little history. A number of years ago when I first came to this Legislature there was a considerable amount of interest at that time in water legislation and I took an interest in that legislation. Two years later I was elected Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture. At that time it was the Committee on Agriculture and Recreation. Later it became the Committee on Agriculture and Environment. The committee system has functioned in this manner. The Ag Committee, as we commonly refer to it, dealt with issues that handled land use and many other issues that came before the committee relative to the purely agricultural matters. The policy established by this Legislature many years prior to my entry into this body was that water as a resource belonged to all the citizens of the State of Nebraska, that its impact was too broad to be relegated only to a committee of singular interest. For 12 years I have served as Chairman of the Ag Committee and not once did I challenge that theory, notwithstanding the fact that there were many times that I did introduce legislation which impacted upon the water of the State of Nebraska, but those bills were always referred to the Committee on Public Works. I do not recall an instance, I do not believe there is a record of any time in the 12 years that I have served as Chairman of the Agriculture Committee that there was a disagreement between myself and the Chairman of the Public Works Committee as to the references of those bills. I know that as time progressed the interest became more intense as it related to water matters. This is also true of the interest in the environment. There are those here today who profess to have a vital and deep interest in the environment, and I appreciate that, but I would like to point out to at least